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Levy likely to attend Malta conference

By MICHAEL YUDELMAN

Foreign Minister David Levy is likely to attend the Malta conference of the foreign ministers of the European Union and 12 Mediterranean nations, which opens tomorrow. The decision came after being promised by the European Union that a resolution denouncing Israel would not be adopted, ministry sources said yesterday.

Levy is expected to meet Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat at the conference.

The decision to attend, made after consultations with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,



David Levy (Israel Sim)

peace process out of the two-day conference and to keep these issues out of its resolutions.

However, ministry sources said some harsh denunciatory speeches are expected.

The EU, whose 15 member states give \$2.3 billion annually in aid to Israel, the Arab states, and the Palestinians, urged Levy to take part in the conference, as did the US and Foreign Ministry professionals, ministry sources said.

The EU is seeking to expand its role in the peace process and its political clout in the region. So far Israel and the US have rebuffed EU attempts in this direction, stating that Europe cannot replace the US as the honest broker in the peace process.

Meanwhile, an Israel Radio report, attributed to the Foreign Ministry, that US special peace envoy Dennis Ross is to arrive at the end of the week was described by a US Embassy source as "inaccurate." The source said no such decision has been made. The report followed a meeting between US Ambassador Martin Indyk and Levy yesterday.

Foreign Ministry sources said the two discussed the possibility of a Ross visit and the situation of the peace process, and that Levy briefed Indyk about his meetings in Turkey and with EU officials. They also spoke about the Malta conference, the sources said.

Politics to overshadow economics at meeting,
Page 4

has not been announced officially, pending further assurances from Israel's delegation already in Malta, that the conference will not be exploited as a stage from which to attack Israel.

Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency and who met with Levy on Saturday night, assured him that the Arabs have agreed to leave the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation and

Ruling keeps Bar-Ilan open

By HAIM SHAPIRO and Tim

The High Court of Justice yesterday overturned Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy's decision that Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan be closed to traffic during prayer times on Shabbat and holidays.

At the same time, a majority of the seven-justice panel said that if a solution could be found for the secular residents of the street and the neighborhoods along it - Court President Aharon Barak suggested issuing them with special decals that would allow them to drive during the hours the street is closed to other traffic - Levy's decision could stand.

Security for Barak and the other six justices was increased following yesterday's decision, Israel Radio reported.

In this decision, Justice Tsvi Tal - the court's only religious justice - who wrote a separate opinion upholding the total closure of the street on Shabbat and holidays, joined Barak and Justices Shlomo Levin and Elyah Mazza for pragmatic



Labor MK Ophir Pines (right) argues with Yehuda Meshi-Zahav of the Eda Haredit after yesterday's High Court ruling. (Brian Handler)

Area residents vilify ruling,
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reasons. Justices Theodor Or, Mishaal Cheshin, and Dalia Dornor opposed closing the street under any circumstances.

In his majority opinion, Barak wrote that if there were not alternate routes to Rehov Bar-Ilan, a main traffic artery linking the northern and northeastern parts of the city with downtown and the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway, the street could not be closed. He noted, however, that alternate routes do exist, and add at most a few extra minutes of travel time. He added that if the possibility

of closing either of the two alternate routes, which also pass near haredi areas, on Shabbat is raised, the Bar-Ilan case would be reopened. He also said there must be no interference with Shabbat traffic on Bar-Ilan during non-prayer times and that security and emergency vehicles can use the street at any time.

The three justices in the minority argued that Bar-Ilan is a major artery and not a neighborhood street, which can be closed

on Shabbat. They said such an artery cannot be considered the "private property" of the people who live along it, and that the fact that the smaller streets in these neighborhoods are closed is a sufficient compromise.

Last night, about 100 haredim demonstrated along Bar-Ilan as dozens of policemen stood by. On several side streets off the main thoroughfare, haredi youths set garbage bins alight and threw stones and bottles at police cars.

No one was injured and two youths were arrested. Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, the so-called "operations officer" of the Eda Haredit, predicted a "hot" summer, with protests and demonstrations, as a result of the ruling.

"This is the first time that the High Court has determined the weather," Meshi-Zahav said, adding he had not expected a favorable ruling and predicting there would continue to be

protests as long as there is traffic on the street on Shabbat.

Ornan Yekutieli, the Meretz Jerusalem City Council member who has spearheaded the fight to keep the street open to traffic, promised that haredi action would be met with counteraction.

"If the haredim start to make programs, we will return to the street," he said.

Continued on Page 2

Three hurt in Allenby Bridge shooting

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Two Israelis and one Palestinian were wounded yesterday, when a Palestinian woman from Kalkilya opened fire on IDF troops and security personnel at the Allenby Bridge border crossing yesterday afternoon.

The woman, 26, married with one son, was a passenger on a bus returning from Jordan.

The bus passed the Jordanian security check and had reached the first Israeli security checkpoint, when it halted and the passengers disembarked. The woman took out a small caliber pistol hidden underneath her coat and fired 5

shots at soldiers and security personnel.

She wounded a 20-year-old security guard, employed by a private firm, in the right upper arm. A 25-year-old soldier who ran to his assistance was shot in the groin. One of the passengers, a 40-year-old Palestinian from Ramallah, was shot in the chest.

The woman then ran back toward the bus, but was overpowered by soldiers and her weapon taken from her. The injured were taken to Hadassah-University Hospital, Ein Kerem and Mount Scopus.

According to Magen David Adom paramedic Ron Zehavi, all the injured suffered from .22

caliber gunshot wounds. The two Israelis, he said, were lightly wounded and the Palestinian moderately.

Immediately after the incident was reported, additional troops were sent to the area. OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and Judea and Samaria police chief Yossi Sibon received reports on the scene.

The incident raises serious questions about the quality of the Jordanian security checks. A security source at the bridge claimed that passengers entering Israel are rarely checked by

Continued on Page 2

Plant evidence supports authenticity of Shroud of Turin

By JUDY SEGEL

Powerful evidence supporting the view that the Shroud of Turin - the garment in which Jesus is said to have been wrapped after his crucifixion - originated in the Land of Israel has been provided by researchers at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Duke University in North Carolina.

The scientists have succeeded in identifying 28 species of plants that grow in the Land of Israel among the images of flowers that appear on the shroud. All of them grow in the area between Jerusalem and Jericho, and most are spring flowers that apparently were picked during the period of the crucifixion and placed on the 4.1 meter by 1.1 meter piece of linen.

On the shroud appears the negative image of a man with long hair and a moustache who had been cruelly whipped, and a number of blood spots were spattered on it. The human image is similar to drawings of Jesus that have been seen since the fourth century CE. There are also hundreds of images of flowers and other plants and objects on the shroud.

HU Prof. Avinoam Danin, an expert on the plant life of the Land of Israel, was asked in 1995 by Dr. Alan Whanger - a Duke University medical lecturer - and his wife Mary to study images of flowers on the shroud. They used a special process of photography, along with negatives and ultraviolet light scanning, to increase the contrast and make visible images that are not easily seen by the naked eye.

The Whangers, who are believing Christians, found hundreds of images of plants, particularly in the area of the human figure's head. They then matched these images to drawings in the authoritative botanical work, *Flora Palestina*, and in this way identified 28 types of plants.

Danin verified their conclusions and was even able to determine that additional images on the shroud could be associated with plants from the Land of Israel.

"I can't say for certain that it was Jesus's shroud," said Danin, who disclosed his findings in a lecture to biology students last week and is still "very excited" about them. "But this evidence backs up the possibility that it is genuine, and there is no doubt that it comes from the Land of Israel."

The researchers plan to study rock rose pollen grains removed from the shroud in the 1970s and compare them with pollen from

the same plants collected in Israel. They will also study the images of other ossified objects found on the

burial cloth, including a nail, hammer, broom, rope, a ring of thorns, and a sponge.

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All or Nothing

Given Not an Inch, Political Foes Take a Mile

By KEVIN SACK

ANGRY California voters didn't just tinker last year when they revolted against perceived abuses in affirmative action. They rolled out a guillotine called Proposition 209 and killed the program with one slice of a fast-falling blade.

New York legislators are taking a similarly tough approach to rent control, threatening to let expire a state program that has suppressed apartment rents in New York City for 50 years. In Washington last year, "welfare as we know it" was not so much reformed as it was gutted.

On each of those issues, many analysts now argue, advocates for sweeping social programs adopted such uncompromising stands that they gradually alienated any constituency for reform. The result was the death or debilitation of many programs that might have survived had deft surgery been embraced as an option.

The phenomenon has changed the very definition of reform.

In many instances, reformers are no longer the people who want to adjust the programs to strengthen them; they are the ones who want to gut or abolish them. In today's political lexicon, welfare reform often means the end of welfare. Tax reform, at least as Speaker Newt Gingrich proposed it last week, means eliminating capital gains and estate taxes. Period.

Last week, in fact, the strength of abolitionist sentiment seemed to increase.

In New York, anti-rent control legislators beat back an attempt to extend regulations. In California, a Federal appeals court upheld the constitutionality of Proposition 209.

In the offices of the advocates, policy analysts,

academics and editorial writers who have made a practice of defecding policies to their death, there is now some belated second-guessing about that strategy.

One who argues that advocates for social programs need to learn the art of compromise is Wendell E. Primus, who resigned as deputy assistant secretary for health and human services last year in protest over the effect of the 1996 welfare bill on children. He is now director of income security for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonpartisan group in Washington that lobbies for low-income families.

"With regard to immigrants, for instance, I don't think we were willing to acknowledge that there was a problem there," Mr. Primus said, speaking of the welfare law's sanctions against legal immigrants. "I believe the advocates do the programs a disservice by not recognizing that sometimes the problems exist and that you need to get on top of them."

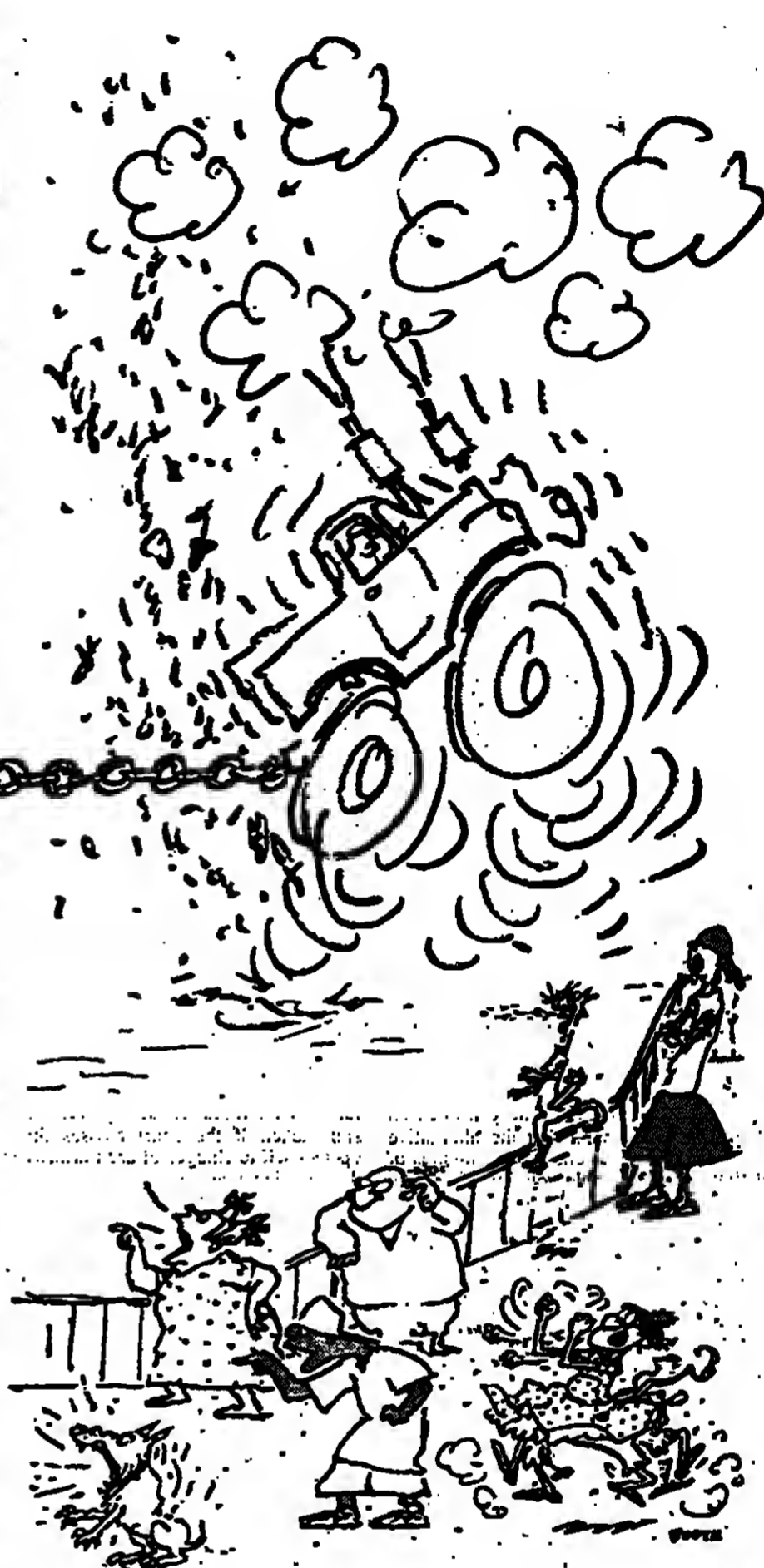
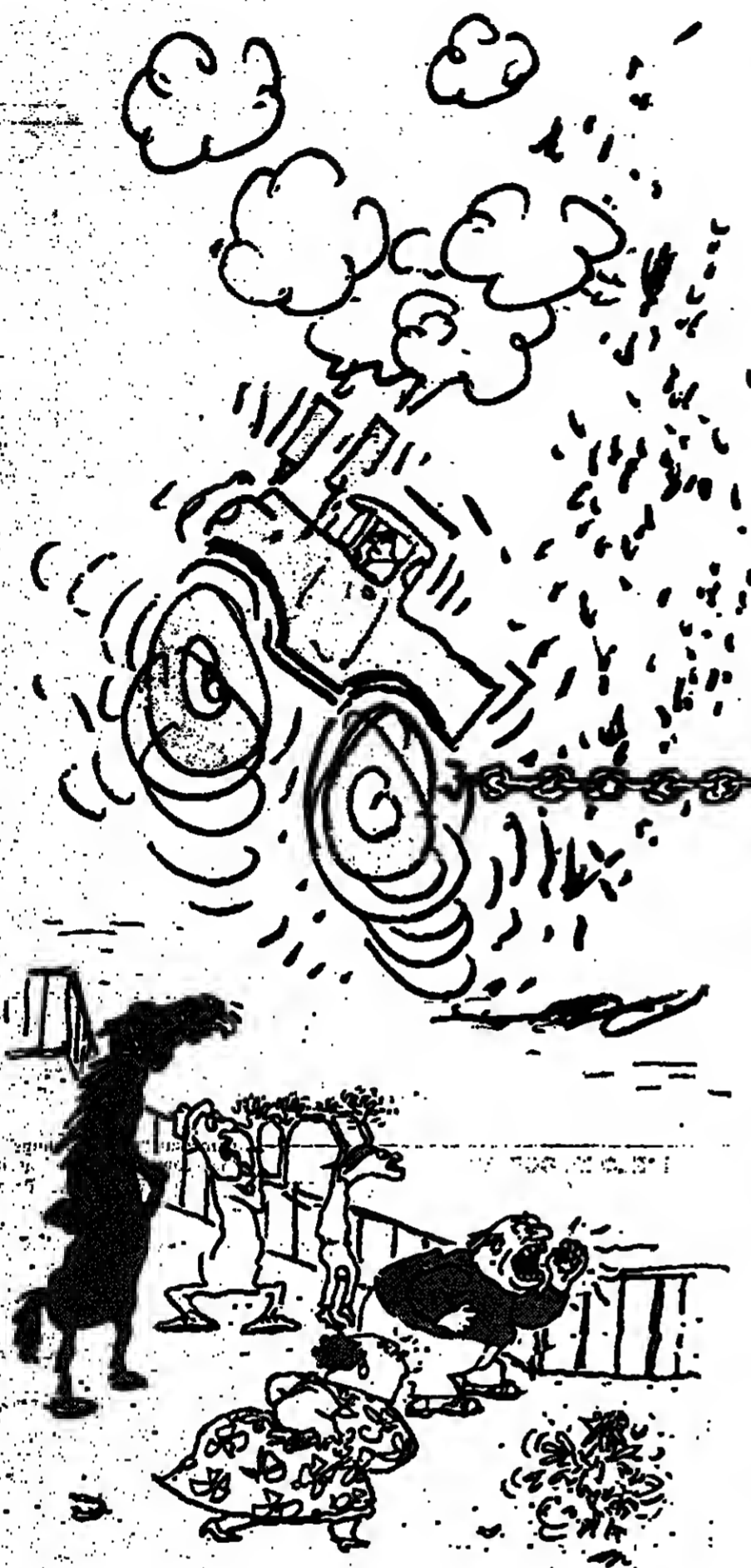
Another Clinton Administration exile, David T. Ellwood, a welfare policy theorist who is academic dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, said he sensed a real tension among welfare reformers between a desire to talk about the system's failings and the fear that doing so would "just encourage people to cut, slash and burn."

"The welfare system had lost so much credibility by the time welfare reform was on the Republican agenda that it seemed almost impossible for people to talk about the bad parts of the bill and be believed," Mr. Ellwood said.

"And the tragedy is that we went way past where the American public wanted us to be, in my view. But there was nobody to say, 'Stop in the middle.'"

Rigidity is not a trait of only the left. The right's inflexibility on the budget a year and a half ago shut

Continued on Page 2



George Rock

She's Back

British Politics, in a Word (Still): Maggie

By WARREN HOGE

MARGARET THATCHER swept into party headquarters last week to give a campaign pep talk to her fellow Conservatives, and the 300 candidates greeted her as if she were Dolly Levi returning to the Harmonia Gardens. The moment she took the stage, resplendent in blue silk brocade with every hair of her shimmering ash-blond coil in place, they gave her a welcome as hearty as the one belted out by "Hello, Dolly's" singing waiters, and Prime Minister John Major, not always known for having the right lines, beamed at her and said, "Welcome back here where you belong."

The same party that hounded her out of office seven years ago, leaving her powerless and embittered, has wooed her back this year to help it try to overcome the double-digit lead held by the Labor Party in the polls. "They have resurrected her after reviling her for so long," said Lord McAlpine, her close friend and onetime treasurer of the party. "It's the only chance they've got, though, mind you, I think it may be a little late."

She does not disguise her delight at being in the public eye again. "I'm fighting fit; it is marvelous to be here," said the 71-year-old former Prime Minister, now known as Baroness Thatcher of Kasteven, on Wednesday at her first campaign stop, in the Dorset town of Bournemouth. Presented with a shepherds' dog by children there, she said, "I like acid soil, just like me." Then she took the tall, bespectacled local

candidate for Parliament, Chris Chope, aside, adjusted his blue lapel rosette and put him through full inspection. "You will win," she said. "But you will have to work quite hard, do you hear? You want to speak to as many people as possible — it's a good basis for the future. You have got to work on getting a good display of posters. You have got to see that they are not torn down."

Whether she will have any effect on the outcome of the May 1 election is not clear, but the re-emergence of the woman who led the Tories to three victories between 1979 and 1987 is a reminder of just how profound her influence on British public life continues to be long after the 11 transforming years of her Prime Ministership. An inscription on the architect Christopher Wren's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral says, "Reader, if you seek his monument, look around you." Last week a London columnist suggested the words could apply to Lady Thatcher.

Blair's Debt

A good place to look was close by St. Paul's, where Tony Blair, leader of the party that he has refashioned into "New Labor," was telling assembled business leaders at the Corn Exchange that his once-socialist party would not reverse any of the privatizations put through by the Conservatives and that it would probably recommend some moves out of the public sector of its own.

Prime Minister Thatcher had put 10 percent of the British economy into private hands during her years in office, and Mr. Blair had at the time described the action as "legitimized political corruption." In his

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U.S. Courts, Third World Law

Fighting international terrorism isn't always compatible with the U.S. justice system.

By Jan Hoffman

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Philippine Legacy

Memories of Marcos are stirring old passions.

By Seth Mydans

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Weird Science

The Tuskegee experiment's effects endure.

By Jeff Stryker

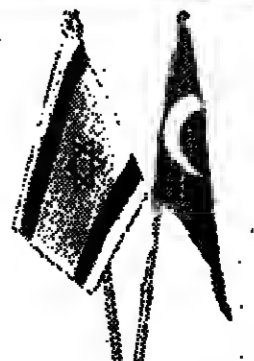
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Odd Couple

Israel and Turkey are friends. And that explains a lot.

By Stephen Kinzer

3



The World



Dead but not gone: The corpse of Ferdinand Marcos is paid a visit by his widow.

Marcos Died, but It Didn't Last

By SETH MYDANS

THE electric bill has finally been paid, the air conditioning is back on again, and the embalmed corpse of Ferdinand E. Marcos is not melting. Still unburied eight years after he died — 11 years after he fled the Philippines — the body of the former dictator continues to cause trouble.

The electric company's bill-collecting tactics last month — shutting off the power when Mr. Marcos's wealthy widow, Imelda, claimed she could not afford to pay — have stirred old passions. Mrs. Marcos is still insisting on a hero's burial, and the question of what to do with the body has arisen again to divide the nation.

It may seem a simple thing, deciding the fate of the refrigerated remains in a crypt in Mr. Marcos's home town, Batac. But there is a bigger problem.

The ghost of Ferdinand Marcos himself, it seems, has not yet been laid to rest in the Philippines.

Mr. Marcos dominated the country for 20 years; then fled to Hawaii to die in disgrace.

Memory Lane

But his millions — most people say billions — of dollars in stolen wealth have mostly not been recovered, or even fully accounted for. None of his top lieutenants has been jailed. Most of the court cases against his family remain pending and the allegations of corruption against him have never been proved in court for the historical record. Many of those who hold power today — notably President Fidel V. Ramos — were Marcos men in their day.

Indeed, in a certain way this is still the Marcos Philippines. From the beginning of the campaign that eventually brought down Mr. Marcos in 1986, Corazon C. Aquino herself defined her philosophy in terms of the man she was seeking to overthrow. As his successor in the presidency, she vowed, she would be "the complete opposite of Marcos."

Now the major themes of government, politics and nation-building can be defined similarly by contrast with his rule: democratic government and freely contested elections, independent and functioning government institutions, an open and accountable economy, an end to monopolies, decidedly un-imperialist presidents.

But this is not yet a self-confident democracy. Dictatorship has left a legacy of slyness, and Filipinos are hypersensitive to any government



Accustomed to defacing: Marcos mega-bust.

actions that might bring back the past. An initiative to amend the constitution to allow Mr. Ramos a second term is being met by threats to revive the popular uprising called "people power." A tough anti-terrorism law proposed last year was rejected by the public as smacking of repression. Moves toward instituting a national system of identity cards have raised fears that freedoms will again be curtailed.

No, I'm Not Him

"Basically, we are dealing with a ghost," a leading journalist said. "Every time there seems to be a move to restrict civil liberties, Marcos haunts the debate. Ramos has to keep saying over and over again that he is not Marcos. The wounds are in many respects still very raw. The psyche is still traumatized."

With power so distrusted, inordinate store is put in what might otherwise seem unremarkable exercises of freedom — as when the once-dominant Supreme Court frustrates presidential initia-

Burying this man's body is no easy thing. Neither is burying his legacy.

tives at will, a congressman is arrested for rape, and a tycoon is charged with tax evasion.

One major legacy of the Marcos years, though, remains intractable: widespread corruption that saps the economy and separates the common man from the rich and well connected.

There are those who say it is time to bury the past: Let Mr. Marcos's body be laid to rest in the Hero's Cemetery in Manila as his widow demands. After all, proponents argue, a police dog that was killed in one of the coup attempts against Mrs. Aquino is buried there.

Filipinos love a good, noisy debate. "If we forgive Marcos, we might as well give sainthood to Judas!" proclaimed the newspaper columnist Max V. Soliven.

And Mrs. Marcos knows a good dramatic role when she sees one. "No music, no flowers," she pleaded. "He was a simple man."

One congressman, Bernardo Vergara, is proposing a compromise: Bury him here in Tuba, in the Cordillera Mountains 200 miles south of his home town, beside a bizarre, three-story concrete bust of himself that the late president ordered built on a steep hillside.

It is the young Marcos the sculptor captured, with his hair in a Ronald Reagan pompadour, gazing coolly out across his domain as if he would rule forever.

When he was ousted in 1986, some of his angry countrymen tried to blow up the statue but succeeded only in creating a small hole behind one ear. But time is accomplishing what they failed to do. The concrete shell is beginning to chip away, like a Philippine Ozymandias, revealing the wire mesh beneath it.

"He looks lonely," said Rainier Rivera, one of his diminishing corps of loyalists who had brought his family to gaze at the bust through tiny binoculars.

Abandoned and mostly forgotten, the colossal wreck is disappearing into the surrounding underbrush: pink, purple and white bougainvillea, Christmas palms, guava and avocado trees and the tall grass called talahib. Birds chirp in the sunshine, crickets buzz, and a gecko lizard quacks from somewhere up around the Marcos forehead.

Israel and Turkey

The Mideast's New Friendship

By STEPHEN KINZER

WHEN the fiery Islamic politician Necmettin Erbakan took office as Prime Minister of Turkey last June, it was logical to expect that he would tone down his passionate denunciations of "Zionist imperialism" and stop calling for a jihad to liberate Jerusalem. But few expected to see him sitting down for a friendly chat with the Israeli Foreign Minister.

That improbable meeting took place last week at the Foreign Ministry in Ankara. True to form, a group of protesters assembled in Istanbul to burn an Israeli flag and declare the visiting dignitary, David Levy, "persona non grata." What was remarkable was not the protest, but the fact that Mr. Erbakan, who a year ago might have led it, was now its target.

Deepening the Ties

During his visit, Mr. Levy met with several high-ranking Turkish officials in addition to Prime Minister Erbakan, discussing civilian cooperation and ways to increase trade. But undoubtedly his most substantive meeting was with the chief of the Turkish general staff, Gen. Ismail Hakkı Karadayı. They reviewed the rapidly expanding Turkish-Israeli security relationship and agreed to deepen it.

Over the last two years, Turkey and Israel have quietly forged a remarkable program of military cooperation; in the process, they have created what is now the most powerful military friendship in the Middle East. The relationship is continuing to develop, improving the security of both countries even as relations between Israel and the Palestinians deteriorate, and as the entire region faces the rise of fundamentalist Islamic movements.

In particular, the relationship can only make Israeli leaders more confident that they can take tough positions in dealing with their Arab neighbors. An alliance with Turkey could go a long way toward neutralizing Syria in any major crisis. It could also make Syria think twice about stirring up trouble to Israel's north, however preoccupied Israel may be with quelling unrest among the Palestinians.

Leave religion out of it. Both lands have long been at odds with Arabs, notably Syria.

Solidarity between Turks and Jews stems in part from their common history of conflict with Arabs. Turks ruled much of Arabia until early in this century, when their rule was overthrown in a series of British-backed rebellions; Israel has lived its whole national life in conflict with some or all of its Arab neighbors. Today both countries count Syria and Iraq, together with Iran, as threats to their security.

Turkey's military planners portray their country as caught inside a "Bermuda Triangle" of chaos, with the Middle East on one side, the Caucasus on another and the Balkans, including their traditional rival Greece, on the third. Like the Israelis, they feel the need for a strong friend nearby.

These cold strategic calculations are the basis for a growing military

relationship. Israeli technicians are now directing a \$600 million program to modernize Turkish fighter jets. Israeli pilots are practicing maneuvers in Turkey's vast airspace — and, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, are "almost certainly" flying reconnaissance missions aimed at nearby countries like Syria and Iraq. Turkish and Israeli cadets and officers attend each other's military academies. Naval units hold maneuvers off each other's coasts.

Some analysts predicted that these arrangements would collapse after Prime Minister Erbakan took office last year. If Mr. Erbakan had remained faithful to the oratory he used during his 30 years in opposition, they might have. But after he made some anti-Israel statements early in his term, the Turkish military, which views itself as the country's long-term guardian above and beyond politics, stepped in. Publicly and privately, commanders lectured Mr. Erbakan on the security value of Turkish-Israeli ties. To show the world that they had persuaded him, the senior commander, General Karadayı, flew to Tel Aviv in Febru-

Air force and naval cooperation add up to the area's hottest new military fact of life.

ary and pledged faithful friendship. "Turkey will not share your military information with others," he told the Israelis, "nor will we pass your military technology to other nations."

Nor surprisingly, nearby countries have been sharply critical of Turkey. In February leaders of Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia issued a joint appeal urging Turkey to reconsider. Iran and Greece also complained. The Turkish Foreign Ministry responded tartly that the wave of protest "does not concern us at all."

Wielding Pincers

If this new alliance has a principal target, it is Syria, which borders both Turkey and Israel and harbors longstanding grievances against both. Suddenly it finds itself facing a powerful alliance with pincers on its northern and western borders. It can no longer think of confronting either country without worrying about retaliation from the other.

The alliance also alters the Greek-Turkish balance. Greece and Syria maintain good ties based on their shared antagonism to Turkey, and Greek strategic planners have long assumed that if Greece and Turkey were to face off in the Aegean, they could count on Syria to mobilize its army and keep many Turkish troops tied down in the southeast. Under the new power constellation, Syria could not do so without expecting counterpressures from Israel.

Most Turks, with the exception of pan-Islamists in Prime Minister Erbakan's party, seem to support their country's embrace of Israel. Despite widespread anger here at Israel's treatment of Palestinians, they believe that the friendship is in their national interest. Evidently Mr. Erbakan agrees, which suggests that his Turkish nationalism is stronger than his Islamic militancy. He is also howling to a reality of Turkish political life that has remained unchanged since the founding of the Republic 74 years ago: In important security questions, the military makes key decisions and the Government follows.



The Israeli Foreign Minister, David Levy, left, meets in Ankara with the Turkish chief of staff, Gen. Ismail Hakkı Karadayı, right.



In Currency Trading, A McIndicator

THE Chinese yuan is the world's most undervalued currency, selling for barely half its real value against the dollar. And the Swiss franc is the most overvalued, selling for 66 percent more than it is worth against the dollar.

At least that's what the Big Mac index says.

The somewhat whimsical index, developed by The Economist, the British weekly magazine, measures the average cost of a Big Mac at McDonald's restaurants around the world, and uses that figure to estimate just how much a currency's valuation deviates from real value.

The latest figures show that the average price of a Big Mac in the United States, including taxes, is \$2.42. That compares to \$4.02 in Switzerland and just \$1.16 in China.

The index assumes that if a Big Mac costs less than \$2.42 under current exchange rates in another country, the local currency is undervalued.

It sounds a little wacky, but as a forecasting device the Big Mac index hasn't done badly.

Two years ago, the index indicated that the Japanese yen was valued at almost twice its real worth. Now, since the dollar has soared against the yen, the conclusion is that the yen is just about fairly valued.

The Economist proudly notes that during the last year, when eight major currencies rose or fell by at least 10 percent in value, the Big Mac index got the direction right for seven of them. That record is, it reports, "better than some highly paid currency forecasters."

FLOYD NORRIS

THE ARTS

Celebrating America's Love of Show Business

By ETHAN MORDDEN

IT IS 1933, the very depth of the Great Depression. A spunky kid delivers her high school valedictory speech, fills out a job application — "for no job," as she wryly admits — then slithers into the pleading but also confident, even triumphant, "All I Need (Is One Good Break)," her voice soaring with the excitement of being fresh, gifted and full of hope.

That was 19-year-old Liza Minnelli, getting her own good break in the first musical by composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb, "Flora, the Red Menace," in 1965. The piece was full of youth, fun, dance and comedy, the essential elements of the American musical, and the essence, as well, of Kander and Ebb.

Whether in the more serious musical play, such as "Cabaret" (1966), "Zorba" (1968), "The Rink" (1984) and "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (1993), or in frisky musical comedy, such as "70, Girls, 70" (1971), "Chicago" (1975) and "Woman of the Year" (1981), Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb celebrate the Big Break, the American love of show biz, making it, performance. Their musicals may be set in Germany, Greece or South America, may defy Fascism and flirt with death. But at the center of their art lies a love of the talent-take-all wonder of entertainment.

The 11th Kander and Ebb collaboration, "Steel Pier," which opens on Broadway at the Richard Rodgers Theater on April 24, reminds us that these men represent the survival of a form of musical that no one else is writing today: filled with that youthful joy that doesn't believe in despair or death.

"Steel Pier," in fact, marks a kind of culmination for the team. We are back in the Depression amid youngsters determined to get their break, this time in a dance marathon. This peculiar institution was above all a survival contest, in which couples had to stay on their feet, more or less in motion, till all but one had dropped out, fainted or been eliminated in

John Kander and Fred Ebb are vivid reminders of a time when musicals were king.

athletic events. But marathons were also performing showcases. There were talent competitions, local press coverage of favored contestants, and, for the especially deluded, the dream of being discovered by that great American wizard, the Hollywood producer.

"Steel Pier" is realistic and gritty; marathon dancers sweat. It's romantic; these are couples. It's dark; major musicals are supposed to be, nowadays. It's a musical play, but then what isn't in the 1990's? What-ever happened to musical comedy?

Paradoxically, around 1960, when the last full generation of Broadway songwriters appeared — Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb's generation — all of them had roots in musical comedy. But while they are all living, they and the show of fun, dance and comedy have largely disappeared. Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, who began with "The Body Beautiful" (1958), and Charles Strouse and Lee Adams, who began with "Bye Bye

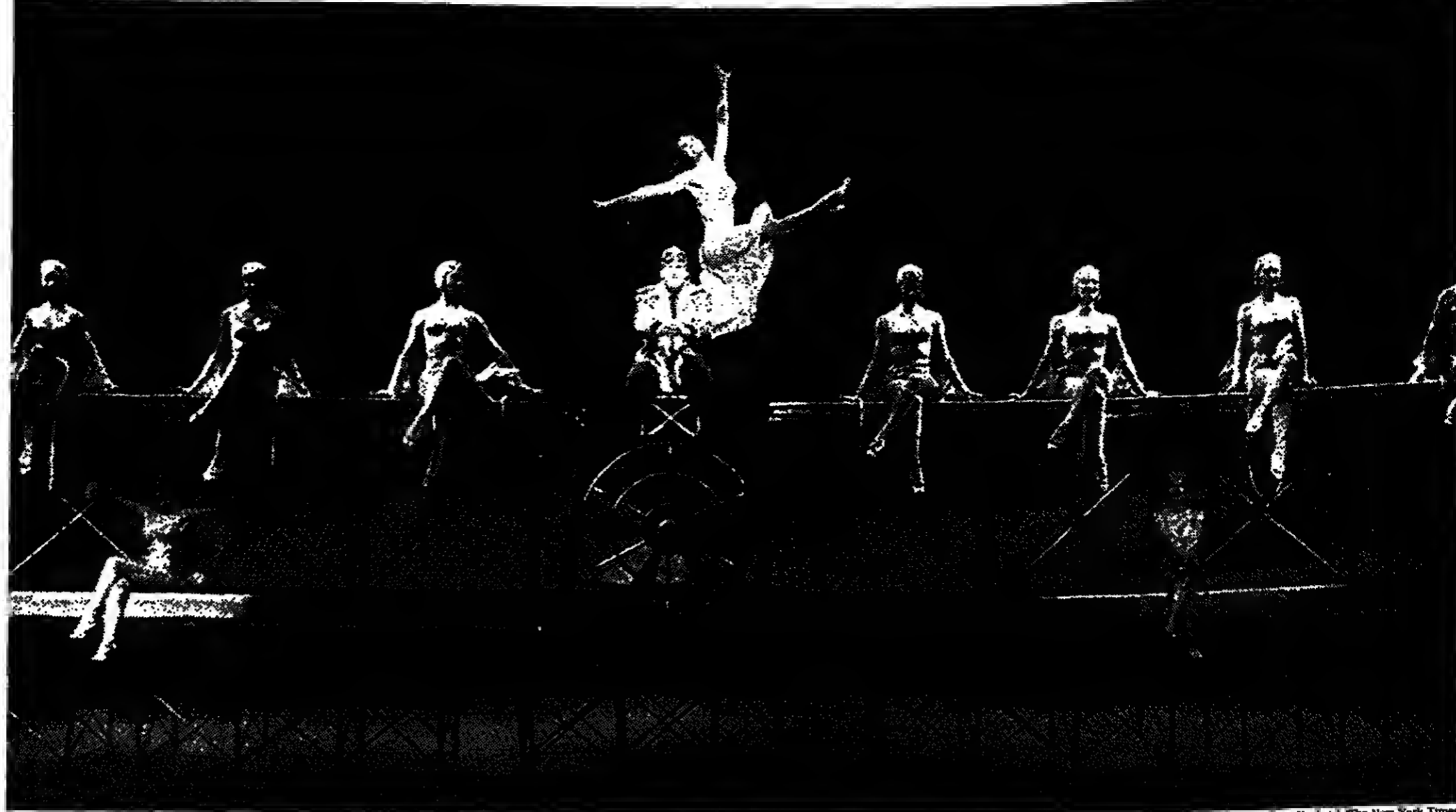


Composer John Kander, left, and lyricist Fred Ebb.

Birdie" (1960), split up some time ago. Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones, whose first show, "The Fantasticks" (1960), is still playing Off Broadway, left the commercial theater for experimental work. Jerry Herman has not produced a stage score since "La Cage aux Folles" (1983).

Of the major songwriters of that generation, only Stephen Sondheim is, like Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb, still active. But his questing genius has driven him first into opera and then into cameos, deliberately self-limiting, the musical as drive-by. Mr. Sondheim and the musical as entertainment have temporarily parted company.

Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb have



Sara Krulwich/The New York Times

Daniel McDonald and Karen Ziemba, above center, in a production number from the musical "Steel Pier" — Flying down to Atlantic City.

never lost their desire to entertain. Their first show after "Flora, the Red Menace," "Cabaret," combined the thematic perspective of the musical play ("It'll all go on if we're here or not, / So who cares, so what?") with the zest of musical comedy ("What good is sitting alone in your room? / Come bear the music play") in Weimar Berlin. The advancing shadow of Hitler's Third Reich loomed heavily over the action, yet the evening began with one of the most exciting opening numbers of all time.

Joel Grey, as the M.C., slipped onto the stage to assemble the pieces of his nightclub — the band, the waiters, and of course the cabaret girls. "Each and every one," he promised, "a virgin." They didn't look it, and the M.C. didn't sound as if he believed it. "Cabaret" had the style of musical comedy but an edgy mystery as well, the feeling that something intriguingly unpleasant hid under the fun. It was the first Nazi musical, so ready to use a carefree form for social remark, that, at the climax of "If You Could See Her Through My Eyes," a duo act for the M.C. and a gorilla, Mr. Grey cried, on how love blinds the lover, "She doesn't look Jewish at all!"

Popular resistance to this line, failing to detect its anti-anti-Semitic sarcasm, caused the dancers to gentile it down. Still, "Cabaret" was one of the most cynical of musicals, yet a funny and delightful one, with its high-kicking social content.

FUN is basic to a Kander and Ebb show, which is why audiences yip and whoop at the current revival of "Chicago." This is an eruption of musical comedy, loaded with dance in a gamey everyone's-got-too-many-body-parts-and-not-enough-clothes-on

Rivera played the star is to comprehend how Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb work, for Ms. Rivera is one of the last of the outstanding traditional Broadway talents, a fine actress but mainly someone you want to see singing, dancing and cutting up, because nobody does it better.

A musical set in a prison is bold even for the modernist musical. But centering that musical on a fan's worship of a show-biz diva is typical Kander and Ebb. Life is a cabaret: everyone is Liza Minnelli in her Broadway debut, or the cabaret girls, or the murderers in "Chicago," headlining in vaudeville, or the hopeful marathoners in "Steel Pier."

"The score of "Chicago" is largely made of performer "spots" from the 1920's — the Eddie Cantor number ("Me and My Baby"); the Marilyn Miller number ("A Little Bit of Good," though Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb's Marilyn Miller is a drag queen); the Bert Williams number ("Mr. Cellophane"); the Helen Morgan number ("Funny Honey"); the Zee Zee Conroy piano-novelty number ("When Velma Takes the Stand").

There is a strutting profile to a John Kander vamp, a show-off's entrance music. It's so endemic to the Kander and Ebb sound that the vamp becomes as familiar as the vocal melody. Think of the musical intros to "Willkommen," "All That Jazz" or "New York, New York." This is music that has the hots for itself: alive, needy, working it.

It is marathon music; you can dance to it. Choreography has been all but expunged from the modern musical, for the sheer gaiety of dance is too facetious and unreal for shows about rags, assassins, a secret garden, passion. But dance is also a most idealistic art, and "Steel Pier" is looking for signs of hope among its characters. These include Rita, the heroine (played by Karen Ziemba), and her dancing partner, Bill (Daniel McDonald), an aviator; the sinister marathon manager, Mick (Gregory Harrison), a surprisingly potshot force in Rita's life; Rita's main rival as queen of the floor, Shelby (Debra Monk); the gauche but appealing Buddy (Joel Blum), and a young couple from the boon docks, Happy (Jim Newman) and Precious (Kristin Chenoweth).

Let's try a half-full, half-empty. Half-full: the dancers are young and optimistic, possibly within reach of stardom — because they need it. Because it's all luck, anyway. Because that's what America is all about — not talent but determination.

Half-empty: they have to get through not hours but days, weeks of near nonstop dancing, and if everyone can become a star, the system will implode. Somebody has to not get there. As this is one of those dark musical plays, the evening's big loser is one of the more sympathetic characters. We're even given the information right up front, but we miss it. Not making it is hard to absorb in a Kander and Ebb show.

THEIR characters usually make it, just as one can say that musical-comedy characters usually make it. Even the doomed window dresser of "Kiss of the Spider Woman" wept from drudge to hero in his stylized apocalypse, "Only in the Movies." Ambitious and artistic, Broadway's music theater of today often lacks the hot-time-in-the-old-town entertainment that was an absolute in the traditional musical, but Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb always find a place for it.

For instance, the second act of "Steel Pier" opens with the exhausted contestants taking their quarter-hour nap. It's a moment of dazed stillness amid the desperation — but Rita's aviator beckons her outside to join him in a Plane Number, with the female chorus dancing on a biplane's wings, an homage to the 1933 Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers film "Flying Down to Rio." As the refrain assures us, "Things work out, you're sure to find / When you leave the world behind."

Has there ever been a better description of how classic musical comedy feels? A big oomph of this sort has the intention of exhilarating with a combination of a cheer-up

tune and a thrilling visual. Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb, and their collaborators, librettist David Thompson, director Scott Ellis and choreographer Susan Stroman, want to recall a time when the musical was America's favorite thing. (Mr. Thompson, Mr. Ellis and Ms. Stroman are Kander and Ebb stylists: they created the Kander and Ebb revue "..." And the World Goes 'Round" and the 1988 Off Broadway revision of "Flora, the Red Menace," while Mr. Ellis, as an actor, was part of the versatile ensemble of "The Rink.")

"Life is a cabaret" is the key Kander and Ebb line, just as Stephen Sondheim's might be "Childreou

destroy together." This tells us that two very different things are happening in the musical today. One is the intricate evolution of the intellectual show and the other is the tenuous survival of musical comedy, especially in the work of Mr. Kander and Mr. Ebb.

Rising above yet comprehending a culture whose first virtue is making it big in show biz, they preserve the qualities that made the musical, in its prime, the progenitor of the legend of the One Good Break. It's opportunity, it's drama. It leaves the world behind in a myth that comes true. You can make it — or at least dance to it. □

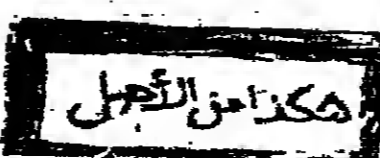
REALTOR-SPEAK

By CATHY MILLHAUSER / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

Grid of answers to the previous crossword puzzle.



In search of an identity

Some 15 Holocaust orphans who live in Israel hope to find clues about their identities with the help of a special television broadcast tomorrow night, Michael S. Arnold reports



Then: Jacob Shinkolevski
Now: Ya'akov Shai

On the eve of Holocaust Memorial and Heroes' Remembrance Day last year, Pina Gutman began to search for her past. Lost two weeks ago, the search bore its ripest fruit: a meeting in Germany with members of the Christian family who sheltered Gutman during the war when her parents, activists in the Warsaw Ghetto, left her with the family and promised to return in a few weeks.

They never came back, and Gutman presumes they died fighting in the ghetto.

From the meeting with Wolfgang and Adele Rebbun, however, she learned a precious few facts about her parents: her mother was pretty, her father tall. They were both about 25 years old when, to a rendezvous arranged through a German soldier, they met Charlotta Rebbun, Wolfgang and Adele's mother, at the ghetto gate and gave her a white baby carriage containing a bundle of clothes and their nine-month-old daughter.

"That's all I know about them," said Gutman, 54, who now lives in Moshav Meishar near Gedera. Still, it's better than nothing — and it makes Gutman something of a success story among the 15 Israeli Holocaust orphans who will take part in a special Channel 1 program tomorrow night at 9. The show, *Lost Identity*, will be broadcast live here and in Poland, where other Jewish survivors gathered in a television studio also will search for clues to the past, stripped from them during the Holocaust.

Producer Ve'ed Berman conceived of the show two years

ago, while working on a documentary on a similar topic. For the film, she had to focus on only the two or three subjects who were most articulate and telegraphic.

"I felt kind of weird that I left the rest of them behind, so it was almost like I owed them something and I thought maybe I could solve some of the problems with a broadcast like this," Berman said. "I realized that the only way to do it is to have the Polish people seeing these people as well."

Most of those taking part have only the faintest hints of their origins: their place of birth, perhaps, the name of a family that sheltered them, the location of an orphanage, a childhood photo. Throughout the broadcast, viewers in Israel and Poland will be invited to call in ((03) 565-1199) if they have clues to the participants' identity.

A follow-up program is scheduled for May 4, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

For many of the participants, the burden of not knowing their origins is both psychological and practical. Each time they're asked — in conversation, in the army, on official forms — for their birthdates, their birthplaces or their parents' names, they have to respond that they don't know. "Can you imagine growing up without backing from anyone for anything you do?" Berman asked. "You have no relatives, nothing, nowhere to go but institutions."

"You can never imagine who you were, where you come from, what your parents were like, what their fantasies were." Many of the Holocaust orphans have tried to repress their questions for most of their lives, according to Lea Balint, director of the Children with Lost Identity department of the Ghetto Fighters' House Archives in Kibbutz Lohamei Hageta'ot. "There are a lot of people who don't want to know about their past because it's so painful, so they try to erase it," she said.



Then: Barbara Rebbun
Now: Pina Gutman



Then: Golda Reiss
Now: Zehava Moskovitz

When Gutman decided a year ago to search for her past, she turned to Balint. Through her, she found clues to the next stages of her wartime story: separated from the Rebbuns just after the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, aged two, she was found in an empty railroad car by a Red Cross worker.

She was sent to live with a Polish family named Kaczmarek. Hounded by the war, the family was expelled from the city of Sierakow to Zyrdow, returning to Sierakow at the war's end.

In 1948, Gutman, then called Barbara, was placed in an orphanage in Orwock, near Warsaw. A few months later, she was adopted by a Jewish family named Himel, with whom she made aliya in 1950.

Gutman traveled to Poland last June. Searching in the records of Warsaw's Jewish Historical Institute, she found a letter from Mr. Kaczmarek describing how she had been found in the train carriage. Gutman then met the Kaczmarek family, returning again in September.

"It was a miracle... it was unbelievable," she said.

ZAHAVA MOSKOWITZ has not been so fortunate. Moskovitz, 54, knows little about her origins or her childhood before the age of four, when she arrived at a transit camp run by Reuma Weizman in Blankensee, Germany. Before that, she has only vague impressions of being on the run, of living in the forest with other abandoned children, and of hiding, always hiding.

She does not know who her parents were, or where and when she was born.

She believes that at some point on her flight she passed through the small city of Piotrolesia in Lower Silesia. Moskovitz now lives on Moshav Beit Yitzhak near Netanya.

"Until a very mature age, I loved to hide myself. I liked to close myself in a closet. I simply felt most comfortable there," Moskovitz, then known as Golda Reiss, was sent to Israel in 1948 with other children from Blankensee. Sooo she was placed with a family on Beit Yitzhak, but after a year or so was sent to live in a Youth Aliya institution called Nitzanim near Ashkelon. There, she watched, as one by one other war orphans were eventually claimed by their relatives.

"All the years, I sat and waited for someone to come pick me up. But no one ever came," Moskovitz said. "I still haven't stopped waiting. It's a very hard

feeling not to know your real identity."

She found an early photo of herself in the files of the Ghetto Fighters' House, but little else. Though she's nervous about participating in Tuesday's show, she hopes some viewer will call in with more clues to her past.

"I want to take part because maybe despite it all, I'll discover something. Maybe I'll find someone, those who saved me, I don't know," Moskovitz said. "Even if I find out something unpleasant, it doesn't matter. 'It doesn't matter if [my parents] were the simplest people, or a professor, a driver or a businessman, a poor man or a rich man."

"It's not important what they were, it's just important to find them," she continued. "And I hope that even if it's not me, that someone on the show will get a little bit of information. We need it for our souls."

Home Front



Ferberizing the world

By Allison Kaplan Sommer

If every time you woke up in the middle of the night, someone handed you \$100, wouldn't you keep waking up? That's the question which we bleary-eyed parents of young children are instructed to ask ourselves as we enter the wonderful world of what has become known as "sleep training." Why in the world would a baby need to be trained to sleep? One would think that, like eating and filling diapers, sleep would be one of the few things that babies are born knowing how to do.

Well, they do sleep — when they want, where they want, and for how long they want.

Unfortunately, this does not coincide with what their parents want, or more accurately, what their exhausted parents need. After a few months of wakiog up every few hours, we need them to learn to sleep at night.

All night. The hope of teaching one's child to sleep through till morning quickly becomes an obsession, an exciting fantasy, the parental equivalent of a dream date with Mel Gibson or Michelle Pfeiffer. (Attaining sexual fantasies would be lost on a new parent, since no matter how attractive a movie-star partner they may get into bed, all they would want to do is tell Mel or Michelle goodnight and catch a badly needed snooze.)

Enter Dr. Ferber and his "100" question. Ferber, for those of you who haven't heard of him (and if you haven't, you

without doing a thing about it. Ferberization inevitably leads to a fight between the parents, one of whom often breaks and offers their suffering angel a bottle or breast, and the other who wants to stand firm by Ferber. When one parent (let's say mom) caves in, dad accuses her of being a wimp. Mom accuses dad of being heartless. Getting angry at each other serves as an important psychological outlet. It's not cool to scream at your sleepless baby, whereas society deems it OK to shout at your spouse.

After a few agonizing nights of this turmoil, in the vast majority of cases, the child gets the message that crying doesn't do them any good, and they give up and go to sleep. And mom and dad get some relief.

The success of this method has led me to wonder if Dr. Ferber hasn't hit upon a breakthrough in human behavior. Maybe he has found the key to all the world's problems! Maybe if we just all ignore difficult or annoying behavior it will go away! How about Ferberizing problem relatives? Let them complain and nag and attempt to induce guilt as long as they want, and refuse to react, or better yet, avoid them entirely. Eventually, they'll stop calling, writing, or inviting you to weddings and bar mitzvas. Problem solved.

Or Ferberizing one's co-workers? Sit through meetings full of angry criticism of your work with an expressionless nod. Don't respond to those pesky

Ferber's method is not for the soft-hearted; it requires gritting your teeth and listening to your precious offspring scream in lonely agony without doing a thing about it.

clearly don't have a child under three), is a sleep guru who has quickly become such a legend that he has been transformed into a verb. "Have you Ferberized your kid yet?" parents ask one another. His method is billed as a tantalizing magic cure for the droopy eyelid set, a guarantee of shut-eye for years to come.

If you can stand it. Ferberization is no picnic. It involves parents letting their baby cry itself to sleep in bed, interrupted only by brief visits from one of its parents — absolutely no rewards, no hugs, no kisses, and no snacks are to be offered, i.e. oo \$100. This method is out for the softhearted; it requires gritting your teeth and listening to your precious offspring scream in lonely agony

pbocoe calls, memos and e-mail. Soon, everyone will realize that it's pointless and leave you alone.

The more I think about it, the more I'm convinced that I'm not the first to catch on to this ingenious approach to human interaction. I'm certain that various leaders in this country have figured it out.

Ever wonder why, after we elect them, our complaints and concerns are ignored by Koesset members? It's not because they are too busy or too understaffed or too concerned with their political power games to respond to us. It's deliberate. We're being Ferberized. They figure that if we cry long and loud but get nothing in return, we'll all just tire out and go back to sleep.

EARTHLY CONCERNS

Poison products of the green revolution

By DVORA BEN SHAUL

If there was one thing that most people in the know were certain of, it was that India's so-called green revolution of a generation ago was the best thing that ever happened to places like West Bengal. Within a few years, new crop management, the introduction of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and irrigation drastically increased agricultural productivity. Once a year, rice crops dependent on rain were replaced by all-year-round growing which brought an unprecedented wave of prosperity to a formerly poverty-stricken region.

One of the secrets of the green revolution was the constant access to water produced by drilling deep wells to tap the under-

ground resources. But in doing this, in many cases, the drilling hit subterranean layers of minerals rich in arsenic. As a result, more than 250,000 people in West Bengal are suffering or have already died from arsenic poisoning.

And not only in West Bengal has poisoned water taken its toll. In Taiwan, at least another 25,000 people have been poisoned from similarly contaminated waters, while the Laguna area of Mexico reports at least 20,000 cases of arsenic poisoning, Chile 20,000 and Mongolia 50,000.

In other places, the results of drinking these contaminated waters are not yet known, but in Cordoba, Argentina, at least 10,000 persons are known to have been exposed as well as high numbers in Obusai,

Ghana. Even the affluent Western countries are not immune. In Cornwall, England, there is known exposure. The US is also struggling to reduce their arsenic exposure levels.

According to Dipankar Chakraborti of Jadavpur University in Calcutta, the man who has been charting the poisoning incidents for almost two decades, the poisonings in West Bengal began very soon after the wells were drilled.

But since almost everyone believed in the green revolution, it was almost impossible to get research funds or governmental cooperation at any level.

Meanwhile, the poisons continued their deadly work. People developed sores, inflamed eyes, melanomas and gangrene.

The poisoned person loses weight, appetite and vigor, becomes weak and apathetic. In the end the sufferer dies.

According to Chakraborti, most of these people have an alternative source of water for household use — the sources they used before the new wells were drilled. But, in many cases, this water is less accessible and may need to be boiled.

Most agricultural products are safe from this poison because they do not absorb it. But by and large, the governments and the research facilities of these developing countries have a vested interest in the green revolution and do not want to bear the costs of having perhaps misjudged the effects of these activities. Until they do, Chakraborti fears, the poisoning will continue.

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Word puzzle and crossword clues:

1. Waste allowance
2. ...
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BUSINESS

in brief

Tadiran, Carrier close \$17.5m. deal

Tadiran Ltd. yesterday said it has closed the sale of 26 percent of Tadiran Consumer Products to Carrier for \$17.5 million.

Jennifer Friedman

Kibbutzim to fight Ronen Committee report

An emergency meeting of the three kibbutz movements yesterday voted to fight against the recommendations of the Ronen Committee on the reform of the Israel Lands Administration.

David Harris

Sharansky in Ukraine

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky flew to Ukraine over the weekend for a four-day visit. During his stay, Sharansky will attend the first joint Israeli-Ukrainian economic forum meeting.

David Harris

Koor Industries to seek \$200m. in Yankee Bonds

First-ever Wall Street bond offer for Israel's private sector

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Koor Industries intends raising some \$200 million in Yankee Bonds in July, the company announced yesterday.

Yankee Bonds are US-dollar denominated loans raised in Wall Street by foreign governments or corporations.

Koor's offer, which follows successful bond offers in New York by the government and the Israel Electric Corporation, will be the first entry of a privately held Israeli company into Wall Street's debt market.

Investment bank Goldman Sachs has been selected as the lead underwriter, with Salomon Bros. and Lehman Bros. also included in

the consortium.

The government made its first venture into the Wall Street bonds market in December 1995, and the IEC became the first company to follow suit last December.

In recent weeks, company CEO Benjamin Gaon and his deputy, Yehuda Milo, have met representatives of many of the world's leading banks which had expressed an interest in the move.

The flotation is expected to last a week and is aimed entirely at American institutional investors, not at Israelis.

This capital-raising venture is part of the company's strategy to expand its various investments in Koor's core businesses and to enable the purchase of international

companies around the world," said Gaon.

There has been considerable international interest in Koor in recent months, with the Morgan Stanley Group purchasing a 1.3 percent share in the company on Wall Street last month.

That deal meant that Koor, Israel's largest and most profitable private company, is now some 26 percent foreign-owned, with US-based corporation Shamrock holding 20 percent of shares and leading Egyptian industrialist Ibrahim Kamel having recently bought 5 percent (according to the Financial Times), through his Cairo-based Kato group.

With some 30 subsidiaries and over 20,000 employees in Israel

and around the world, Koor's 1997 net income increased 8.4% to NIS 587.9m.

Koor's core domestic businesses are now restricted to telecom and electronics, agrochemicals, and building and infrastructure materials. Now the company is looking to expand its foreign interests.

Yankee bonds are dollar-denominated and issued in the US by foreign banks and corporations. Conditions in the US bonds market are generally perceived to be more favorable than either those for the Eurobond or in domestic markets.

El Al forecasts \$80m. loss in '96

By DAVID HARRIS

El Al will, in the coming weeks, announce an \$80 million loss for 1996, company sources told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

Such a sizeable loss could bar the government's intention to begin the company's privatization process this year.

The poor performance is due to external factors and not internal company inefficiencies, the sources said. The dollar exchange rate, a 30 percent increase in fuel costs and the decline in tourism in a year of heightened terrorist activity are the main reasons for the loss, according to El Al.

This is still a better end-of-year picture than that forecast by general manager Yoel Feldschuh, who in October predicted a \$100m. loss for 1996.

In order to offset the anticipated loss, El Al cut 20% of its planned winter schedule and increased layoffs of seasonal employees.

"We are optimistic of an improved situation this year," said company spokesman Nachman Klieman. "There are signs of an increase in tourism, and we already have large numbers of bookings from Israelis traveling abroad."

Israelis comprise more than 50% of El Al's overall market, a change from previous years, when foreigners made up the bulk of the airline's customers.

In general terms, the company tends to report losses in the first quarter, break even in the second, make the majority of its profits in the summer, with the fourth quarter being borderline but usually ending with minor losses.

With the government demanding that El Al make every effort to break even, the \$80m. loss will be a blow to the Prime Minister's Office and Transport Ministry, which are intent on privatizing the company as soon as possible.

Talks among El Al, the Transport Ministry and Government Companies Authority are said to be near completion.

Many close to the talks, particularly from the company itself, believe an imminent flotation is a pipe-dream. Among the problems envisaged are the insistence of Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy that the company not be allowed to fly on Shabbat, no matter who owns the airline, and the protection of workers' rights amid fears of job losses.

The latter has been extensively discussed in a series of meetings between workers' representatives and company executives. At the same time workers have been seeking independent advice on the possibility of purchasing shares in El Al in any future flotation.

A government committee on selling El Al - comprising Companies Authority director general Tzipi Livni, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's economic adviser Moshe Leon and Transport Ministry director general Nahum Langenthal, which should have made its recommendations by mid-January - has still not reached agreement as to the nature of the privatization. There are varying opinions between a public flotation and a private sale.



Edelstein visits Merkavim plant. Merkavim officials yesterday show Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein the company's plant in Petah Tikva, which assembles about 30 buses a month and employs more than 150 immigrants.

Eitan: Effort to oust Israel from Beijing desert conference will fail

Eitan: Effort to oust Israel from Beijing desert conference will fail

By DAVID HARRIS

An international conference on desertification, scheduled for next month in Beijing, will take place with Israel in attendance, despite attempts by Arab and Moslem nations to bar it.

"We received information from the Foreign Ministry that they were trying to prevent us from taking part

in this event," said the spokesman, Naphtali Yaniv. "But to their credit, both China and India said the conference will take place with Israel there, or not take place at all."

The push to bar Israel was led by Iran, Iraq and Syria, with other Moslem, Arab and non-aligned Asian countries joining the call.

"Iran argued that Israel should not participate because it is not part of the Asian bloc in the United Nations," said Foreign Ministry

deputy spokesman Yigal Palmor. "But others, led by the host China, countered that Asia is Asia and Israel has every right to attend."

Israel's participation in the conference is of particular significance because of its technical expertise in the field and subsequent ability to offer assistance to Asian nations.

The Beijing conference is being held as a follow-up to the 1992 world ecological summit in Brazil, which called for better management of land and keeping check on its uses, ahead of the 21st century.

Since then Israel has produced a comprehensive program of aid and assistance on the subject for Asian, African and Latin American countries. Richer nations have indicated they are prepared to pay Israel to help developing countries, Yaniv says this is because they are sure the money will be used for its intended purpose and not go to waste.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev announced earlier this month it is to establish an anti-desertification facility at Sde Boker as a central link in the network of international research institutes implementing a UN treaty against desertification.

The delegation to China will be headed by Eitan, with the technical expertise team led by Prof. Uriel Satriel of the Sde Boker institute.

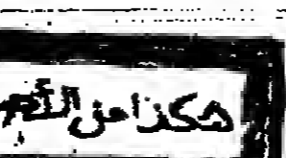
Advertisement for Israel Discount Bank, 'Reading between the lines... you have time for trading action until 11 PM.'

Advertisement for CommStock, 'Some of the world's finest brokers are right here in Israel. There's no need for phone calls and faxes to an overseas broker...' Includes contact information for Douglas Goldstein, Mark Dishi, Aaron Kazman, etc.

Advertisement for Internet Post Classifieds, 'DON'T BE LEFT OUT! If you don't have e-mail or even a computer you can still advertise! Reach all of Israel and the world for just...' Includes rates for various durations.

Tenders section for Israel Electric Corporation, 'The Israel Electric Corporation wishes to purchase the following goods and services: Preconditions For Suppliers...' Includes technical specifications for capacitor banks and additional conditions for suppliers.

Table titled 'ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS' showing exchange rates for various currencies (US dollar, Pound sterling, German mark, etc.) and banknotes. Includes source: BANK LEUMI.



SPORTS

in brief

Pinto, Chepumba win London marathon

LONDON (Reuters) - Portugal's Antonio Pinto ran the year's best time on yesterday to snatch victory in the London marathon in one of the closest finishes in the history of the event.

Bangladesh lift ICC trophy off last ball

KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Bangladesh survived a nail-biting finish to beat Kenya by two wickets and win the International Cricket Council (ICC) trophy World Cup qualifying tournament yesterday.

De la Hoya wins WBC welterweight title

LAS VEGAS (Reuters) - Oscar de la Hoya scored a unanimous decision victory over Pernell Whitaker on Saturday to capture the World Boxing Council welterweight title.

Corretja beats Clavet to win Estoril Open

LISBON (Reuters) - Spain's Alex Corretja beat compatriot Francisco Clavet 6-3, 7-5 on yesterday to win the Estoril Open and collect his first ATP title in three years.

Walker hits league-leading homer as Rockies win again

DENVER (Reuters) - Larry Walker kept up his torrid early-season home run pace to help the surging Colorado Rockies outslug the Montreal Expos 12-8 on Saturday for their seventh consecutive victory.

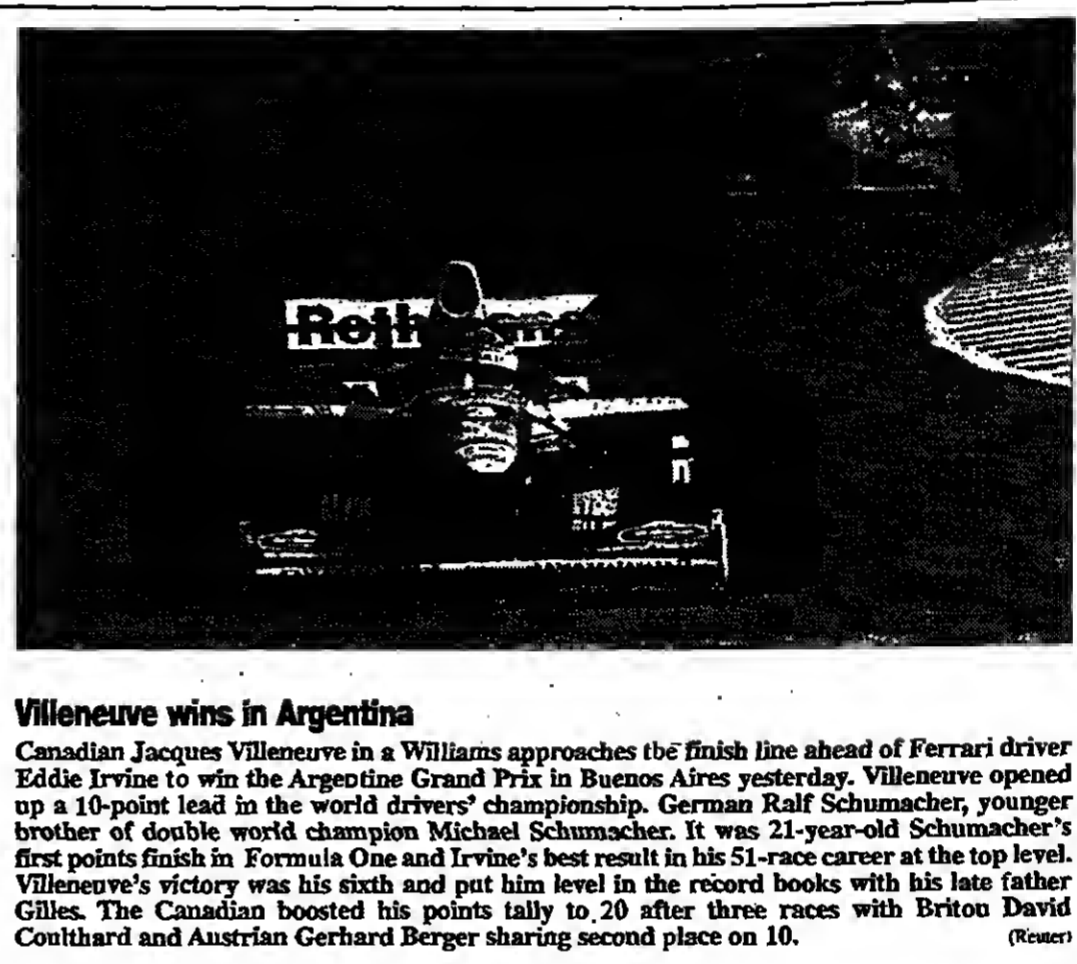
Mac TA takes 1-0 lead in semifinal series vs. Eilat Mac Kiryat Motzkin gains promotion to National League

By RICHARD ZAACKS

Maccabi Tel Aviv cruised to a 112-87 victory over Hapoel Eilat in the opening game of the best-of-five semifinal series at Yad Eliahu last night.

Iverson scores 50 but Sixers lose to Cleveland

CLEVELAND (Reuters) - Allen Iverson scored 50 points, broke a record set by Wilt Chamberlain and declared himself Rookie of the Year, but his Philadelphia 76ers still lost 125-118 to the Cleveland Cavaliers on Saturday.



Villeneuve wins in Argentina

Canadian Jacques Villeneuve in a Williams approaches the finish line ahead of Ferrari driver Eddie Irvine to win the Argentine Grand Prix in Buenos Aires yesterday.

Chesterfield could still re-write history

LONDON (Reuters) - Chesterfield's "impossible dream" of re-writing English soccer history was still alive yesterday after they drew 3-3 with Middlesbrough in one of the most remarkable F.A. Cup semifinal matches ever played.

Woods in historic Masters march

AUGUSTA (Reuters) - Tiger Woods slashed his first-hole tee shot dead center down the fairway as he set off on what was billed as a possible historic final round at the Masters late last night.

The 21-year-old Woods led by a record nine strokes after Saturday's third round, poised to become the youngest champion in Masters history and the first non-white player to ever win a major championship.

Liverpool recover from PSG nightmare

LONDON (Reuters) - Liverpool bounced back from their disastrous European encounter with Paris St Germain to beat Sunderland 2-1 and keep up the pressure on English league leaders Manchester United.

Ottawa blanks Buffalo to clinch first playoff berth

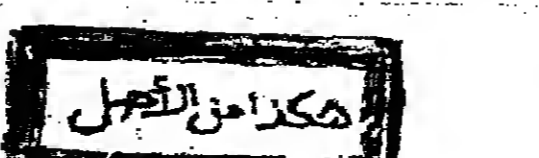
OTTAWA (Reuters) - The Ottawa Senators officially ended their four-year reign as doormat of the National Hockey League by clinching their first playoff berth on Saturday.

Table with columns: Conference (Atlantic, Central, Eastern, Pacific, Midwest, Western), Division, Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists various MLB teams and their records.

Table with columns: Conference (Eastern, Western), Division (Atlantic, Central, Pacific, Midwest, Western), Team, W, L, Pct, GB. Lists various MLB teams and their records.

CLASSIFIEDS

Large classifieds section containing various real estate listings, rental opportunities, and business advertisements. Includes sections like 'Dwellings', 'Rental', and 'Business Offers'.



CRITIC'S CHOICE

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

The Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra, formerly Keshet Habaroque, presents an all-Vivaldi program...



Cantors (from left) Haim Adler, Naftali Hershik and Asher Helmowitz sing in Jerusalem.

The Ra'anana Symphonetic Orchestra and the Tel Aviv Chamber Choir present...

YIDDISH SONGFEST

HELEN KAYE

Cantors Haim Adler, Naftali Hershik and Asher Helmowitz are lending their singular and combined talent...

FILM

ADINA HOFFMAN

Short-story-sized, modestly budgeted and codirected in sweet, labor-of-love style...

In the best films about cooking and eating, the preparation and delectation of various dishes becomes, after a fashion, a recipe for life...

TELEVISION

ELANA CHIPMAN

The subject of this week's in-depth investigation with Billie Moskona Lerman on Channel 8 is sexuality. Western society has tended to reject and stigmatize people with different sexual identities...

TV

CHANNEL 1

6:30 News flash
6:31 News in Arabic
6:45 Exercise Time
7:00 Good Morning, Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV

8:00 Cartoons
8:30 Maccabi
8:50 Wild Turkeys
9:20 The Wizard of Oz
9:45 The Castle of Happiness

MIDDLE EAST TV

7:00 TV Shop
14:30 The 700 Club
15:00 Gerbert
15:25 Movie: The Great McDonagall

CHANNEL 1

15:30 Melomica from Mars
15:55 Booby
16:00 Dubai
16:25 Byker Grove

CHANNEL 2

8:15 Today's Programs
8:30 Tricky - cartoon
7:00 Breakfast Magazine
8:00 Mornings

JORDAN TV

14:00 Holy Koran
14:05 Captain Planet
14:30 The Flintstones

MOVIE CHANNEL (4)

11:30 Windprints (1989) - a murder investigation leads to a search for the truth...

CHANNEL 5

6:30 Bodies in Motion
18:30 Nations League Basketball
19:15 English League Soccer semi final

CHANNEL 8

8:00 Wings of the Red Star, part 3 (ppt)
8:00 Blue Wilderness, a night with Conan O'Brien

CHANNEL 10

1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30
1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30

CHANNEL 11

1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30
1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30

CHANNEL 12

1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30
1:30 The Devil's Own 7:15, 9:30

PRIME TIME TV

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (19:30-22:30) listing TV programs like News flash, Popolizza, It's Nothing, Married with Children, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (22:30-23:00) listing TV programs like Mirrors, STAR PLUS, 6:30 Aerobics Or Style, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (23:00-23:30) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.

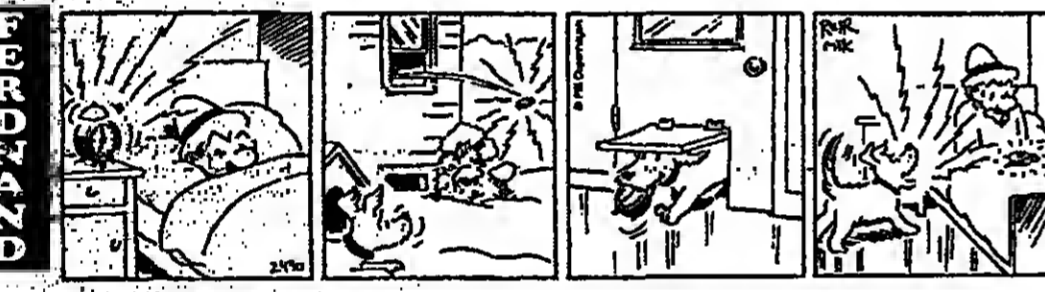
Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (23:30-24:00) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (24:00-24:30) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (24:30-25:00) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (25:00-25:30) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (25:30-26:00) listing TV programs like 6:05 Morning Concert, 8:05 Zvi Avni, etc.



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Protect second vehicle, one found at the back (6,3)
6 Writing back about fighting in a crowd (5)
9 Elastic band held by freelance agent (7)
10 It is instrumental for Alpine cowherds (9)
11 Spare book (7)
12 A mariner goes three feet first along part of a ship's spar (7)
13 A mistake, it is said (4,2,3,6)
18 Neptune fully understood part of musical (7)
20 Colleagues sleeping? (7)
22 Rare of course (9)
23 After a short talk, lease back possession (7)
24 It will return on the 10th (5)
25 Made comfortable again in new surroundings (9)
DOWN
1 A gross he arranged to schedule with others (2,6)
2 In Granada, press kindly to night life (5-3)
3 One having a fling (6)
4 Some envoy, aged 50, on the trip (6)
5 One other contest, say, for a beginner (8)
6 Iron case damaged in the plan of action (8)
7 One goal that has been converted in Africa (6)
8 Mother takes heart many a large bottle (6)
14 Cricket stroke from a private road (8)
15 Discuss at the end of the speech (4,4)
16 Shooter met a novice using an explosive alloy (8)
17 Go round and round in dire need having registered (8)
18 One who fails to honour his class commitments (6)
19 One is barely recognizable in the camp (6)
20 Resume is not quite accurate (6)
21 Improve arrangement of engineers and actors (6)

Crossword puzzle grid with solutions for cryptic crossword.

Quick crossword puzzle grid with solutions.

MOVIES

Jerusalem Cinematheque: The Ghost and the Darkness...
Kazam: Kazam! Kazam! Kazam!...
The Devil's Own: The Devil's Own...
The Hunt for October 7: The Hunt for October 7...
The Hunt for October 7: The Hunt for October 7...

